CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for management of a distributed data processing system, the method comprising:

monitoring resources within the distributed data processing system;

in response to detecting a predetermined event, recording topology information associated with the resources; and

in response to a user request to view historical topology information associated with a specified period of time or associated with a specified previous point in time, displaying a topology map representing topological information for the resources in accordance with a specified temporal constraint.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

representing resources within the distributed data processing system with topological objects;

associating a topology state identifier with a change in topological states;

determining a set of topological objects associated with a topology of resources within the distributed data processing system prior to the detected predetermined event; and

storing the set of topological objects in association with the topology state identifier.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising:

receiving a user request to view a topology map

associated with the topology state identifier; and

displaying a topology map representing the set of topological objects that were associated with the topology state identifier.

4. The method of claim 2 further comprising:

receiving a user request to perform a network management action on a resource within the distributed data processing system through a graphical user interface that presents the resource as a graphical object; and

recording the network action in association with a network action state identifier.

5. The method of claim 4 further comprising:

receiving a user request to view a history of network actions on a resource within the distributed data processing system; and

displaying a historical list of network actions for the resource within the graphical user interface.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein a predetermined event is a network event.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein a predetermined event is a user-initiated-action event.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein a predetermined event is a change in topology within the distributed data processing system.

9. An apparatus for management of a distributed data processing system, the apparatus comprising:

means for monitoring resources within the distributed data processing system;

means for recording topology information associated with the resources in response to detecting a predetermined event; and

means for displaying a topology map representing topological information for the resources in accordance with a specified temporal constraint in response to a user request to view historical topology information associated with a specified period of time or associated with a specified previous point in time.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising:

means for representing resources within the distributed data processing system with topological objects;

means for associating a topology state identifier with a change in topological states;

means for determining a set of topological objects associated with a topology of resources within the distributed data processing system prior to the detected predetermined event; and

means for storing the set of topological objects in association with the topology state identifier.

11. The apparatus of claim 10 further comprising:

means for receiving a user request to view a topology map associated with the topology state identifier; and

means for displaying a topology map representing the set of topological objects that were associated with the topology state identifier.

12. The apparatus of claim 10 further comprising:

means for receiving a user request to perform a network management action on a resource within the distributed data processing system through a graphical user interface that presents the resource as a graphical object; and

means for recording the network action in association with a network action state identifier.

13. The apparatus of claim 12 further comprising:

means for receiving a user request to view a history of network actions on a resource within the distributed data processing system; and

means for displaying a historical list of network actions for the resource within the graphical user interface.

14. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein a predetermined event is a network event.

15. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein a predetermined event is a user-initiated-action event.

16. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein a predetermined event is a change in topology within the distributed data processing system.

17. A computer program product on a computer-readable medium for use within a distributed data processing system for managing the distributed data processing system, the computer program product comprising:

instructions for monitoring resources within the distributed data processing system;

instructions for recording topology information associated with the resources in response to detecting a predetermined event; and

instructions for displaying a topology map representing topological information for the resources in accordance with a specified temporal constraint in response to a user request to view historical topology information associated with a specified period of time or associated with a specified previous point in time.

18. The computer program product of claim 17 further comprising:

instructions for representing resources within the distributed data processing system with topological objects;

instructions for associating a topology state identifier with a change in topological states;

instructions for determining a set of topological objects associated with a topology of resources within the distributed data processing system prior to the detected predetermined event; and

instructions for storing the set of topological objects in association with the topology state identifier.

19. The computer program product of claim 18 further

comprising:

instructions for receiving a user request to view a topology map associated with the topology state identifier; and

instructions for displaying a topology map representing the set of topological objects that were associated with the topology state identifier.

20. The computer program product of claim 18 further comprising:

instructions for receiving a user request to perform a network management action on a resource within the distributed data processing system through a graphical user interface that presents the resource as a graphical object; and

instructions for recording the network action in association with a network action state identifier.

21. The computer program product of claim 20 further comprising:

instructions for receiving a user request to view a history of network actions on a resource within the distributed data processing system; and

instructions for displaying a historical list of network actions for the resource within the graphical user interface.

22. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein a predetermined event is a network event.

23. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein a predetermined event is a user-initiated-action event.

24. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein a predetermined event is a change in topology within the distributed data processing system.